

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 1, 3, 4 and 6-9. Please cancel claims 2, 5, 10-18 and 30-34. Please add new claims 35-57. No new matter is believed to be introduced by the aforementioned amendments. The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

1. **(Currently amended)** A coupler comprising:
an optical fiber receiving structure; and
a fiber stop attached to said optical fiber receiving structure; and
a lens situated along an optical axis defined by the optical fiber receiving structure and the fiber stop such that there is a gap between the lens and the fiber stop;
wherein said fiber stop has an index of refraction approximately the same as the index of refraction of ~~a core of an optical fiber received within said optical fiber receiving structure~~ the lens.
2. **(Canceled)**
3. **(Currently amended)** The coupler of claim ~~[[2]]~~ 1, wherein the ~~window~~ fiber stop comprises a glass material.
4. **(Currently amended)** The coupler of claim ~~[[2]]~~ 1, wherein the ~~window~~ fiber stop comprises a plastic material.
5. **(Canceled)**
6. **(Currently amended)** The coupler of claim ~~[[5]]~~ 1, wherein the lens comprises a glass material.
7. **(Currently amended)** The coupler of claim ~~[[5]]~~ 1, wherein the lens comprises a plastic material.
8. **(Currently amended)** The coupler of claim ~~[[5]]~~ 1, wherein the lens is an aspherical lens.
9. **(Currently amended)** The coupler of claim ~~[[5]]~~ 1, wherein the lens is a spherical lens.

10-34. **(Canceled)**

35. **(New)** The coupler of claim 1, further comprising an optoelectronic element situated along the optical axis.

36. **(New)** The coupler of claim 1, further comprising an optical fiber situated in the sleeve, wherein a core of the optical fiber has an index of refraction that is approximately the same as the index of refraction of the fiber stop and the index of refraction of the lens.

37. **(New)** The coupler of claim 1, wherein the core of the optical fiber is in physical contact with the fiber stop.

38. **(New)** The coupler of claim 1, wherein the fiber stop comprises LASFN-9.

39. **(New)** The coupler of claim 1, wherein the fiber stop comprises BK7.

40. **(New)** The coupler of claim 1, wherein the fiber stop comprises borofloat.

41. **(New)** The coupler of claim 1, further comprising an LC barrel enclosing the fiber stop and the lens.

42. **(New)** A coupler comprising:
 a sleeve configured to receive an optical fiber;
 a fiber stop comprising a first side proximate the sleeve and a second side opposite the first side, at least a portion of the second side being aspheric; and
 a lens supported by the fiber stop such that there is a gap between the lens and the second side of the fiber stop, the lens having an index of refraction that is approximately the same as an index of refraction of the fiber stop.
43. **(New)** The coupler of claim 42, further comprising an optical fiber situated in the sleeve, wherein a core of the optical fiber has an index of refraction that is approximately the same as the index of refraction of the fiber stop and the index of refraction of the lens.
44. **(New)** The coupler of claim 42, wherein the fiber stop comprises LASFN-9.
45. **(New)** The coupler of claim 42, wherein the fiber stop comprises BK7.
46. **(New)** The coupler of claim 42, wherein the fiber stop comprises plastic.
47. **(New)** The coupler of claim 42, wherein the fiber stop comprises glass.
48. **(New)** The coupler of claim 42, wherein the lens comprises a ball lens.
49. **(New)** The coupler of claim 42, further comprising an optoelectronic element situated along an optical axis that is defined by the first surface, the second surface, and the lens.

50. **(New)** A coupler comprising:
 an optical fiber receiving structure; and
 a fiber stop proximate the optical fiber receiving structure; and
 a lens situated along an optical axis defined by the optical fiber receiving structure and the fiber stop such that there is a gap between the lens and the fiber stop, and the lens and the fiber stop being configured such that when an optical fiber is received in the optical fiber receiving structure, the lens, fiber stop and a core of the optical fiber each have an index of refraction that is approximately the same; and
 an optoelectronic element situated along the optical axis.
51. **(New)** The coupler of claim 50, wherein the fiber stop comprises LASFN-9.
52. **(New)** The coupler of claim 50, wherein the fiber stop comprises BK7.
53. **(New)** The coupler of claim 50, wherein the fiber stop comprises plastic.
54. **(New)** The coupler of claim 50, wherein the fiber stop comprises glass.
55. **(New)** The coupler of claim 50, wherein the lens comprises a ball lens.
56. **(New)** The coupler of claim 50, wherein the optoelectronic element comprises a laser light source.
57. **(New)** The coupler of claim 50, wherein the optoelectronic element comprises a detector.